

Undergraduate Program for Training Health Planners and Administrators

MARSHALL W. RAFFEL, Ph.D.

AN ENORMOUS need exists for health planners, health administrators, and health service evaluators. Health agencies and universities across the land are handicapped by having too few personnel that are academically trained in these fields. The demand shows no signs of tapering off; indeed, there are indications of increased demands due to legislative and executive recognition of the need for expanded and new programs and for better yardsticks in allocating resources.

Widespread adoption of the planning-programming-budgeting (P-P-B) system is likely to increase the demand for planners and evaluators. P-P-B has to date focused largely on budgeting, but increased attention to planning will come about. Planning is a continuous process and must address itself to some purpose—to the development of programs to achieve certain goals or objectives. Implicit in planning is evaluation; evaluation of direction and achievement is inevitable.

A further indication of the demand for plan-

ners and evaluators comes from a developing Federal trend toward authorizing the administrative reservation of 0.5 to 1.0 percent of grant funds for purposes of evaluation. Authority for fund reservations has already been given for formula and project grants under sections 314 (d) and (e) of the Public Health Service Act, and for child health programs, Regional Medical Programs, Community Mental Health Centers, and other programs. Health programers have nearly always expressed an interest in evaluation and have outlined how they proposed to evaluate their services. But to a large extent evaluation has been focused not on whether services have maintained or improved the health of the consumer but rather on whether the planned services were actually generated and were of the quality desired.

The need to deviate from measurement of activity and focus on measurement of impact is implied by authorized fund reservations and by those who have been most closely concerned with the administrative policies relating to them. It is clear that because of the enormous social problems faced by society, future allocations of resources for health systems will depend largely on ability to generate good data on program effectiveness; specifically, in terms such as lives to be saved, disease to be prevented, and disability to be reduced.

Increased demand for planners and evaluators also comes from the proliferation of comprehensive health planning agencies generated

Dr. Raffel is professor of health planning and director, division of biological health, College of Human Development, Pennsylvania State University, University Park. This paper is an extension of remarks before the medical care teaching session sponsored by the joint committee on medical care education of the American Public Health Association at the 96th annual meeting in Detroit, Mich., November 11, 1968.

by sections 314 (a) and (b) of the Public Health Service Act. The enormity of health program planning needs is compounded by the widespread need for planners who are comprehensively trained. The shortage of trained administrators also is critical. We have only to note the unfilled positions in health agencies across the land and the subsequent inability of these agencies to administer desired programs.

Response to the pressing need for public health workers has usually been at the graduate level, where students have a mixed background, many from medicine and the basic medical sciences. Such training, while useful, often is not as appropriate as it might be for graduate study in health planning, administration, and evaluation. Basic solutions to many major health problems today are not clinical but rather economic and political. In any event, the need for people educated in these fields is so great that, no matter what the existing graduate programs are accomplishing, the number of graduates cannot possibly counterbalance the number of unfilled positions.

The logjam in meeting today's needs should not disillusion us. We should recognize and accept the fact that the solution to this manpower shortage will come only by persuading more students to opt for the health field. Undergraduate programs in health planning and administration can effectively educate people for these jobs without violating either the myth or the reality of a liberal education. A great number of students could thereby be channeled into the health field. Programs including appropriate health courses can offer a liberal education that is solidly founded on the basic biological and social sciences; in addition, they can offer undergraduate students four important opportunities:

1. To do good for people
2. To work in a pleasant professional environment
3. To be well paid
4. To be a generalist early in a career

Outline of Training Program

At Pennsylvania State University, the College of Human Development has such a program. This college focuses on the applied behavioral, social, and biological sciences. It

seeks to take knowledge about man and apply it to the service of man. While the program in health planning and administration is centered administratively in the college's division of biological health, all appropriate resources of the college and university are being used.

The program requires students to study intensively in two of four social or behavioral sciences: political science, economics, psychology, and sociology. The expected typical pairing is (a) political science and sociology or psychology and (b) political science and economics. For example, students may take various courses in political science and carry on through pressure groups and local government. In economics, the student can progress through State and local taxation and through advanced public finance. Students following this path probably will take at least two or three courses in sociology and psychology. The work in the basic behavioral and social sciences, however, will be supplemented by at least 15 credits in applied behavioral and social science studies from courses offered by other divisions of the College of Human Development. Typical courses might include the following:

Division of community development. Dimensions of Community Development and Social Change, Planning and Evaluating Human Service Programs, and Socioeconomic Change and the Process of Dislocation.

Division of man-environment relations. Computer Technology for Human Services Programming, and Environmental Programming.

Division of individual and family studies. Functional and Dysfunctional Variations in Individual Development, Problems in the Analysis of Individual Development, and Conceptions in Development.

Our concern with the behavioral and social sciences and their application does not suggest that we ignore the biological sciences on which health services also depend. Students normally will take courses in physiology, epidemiology, and nutrition, and one in the clinical practice of medicine. The clinical course will be taught largely by physicians on the college staff and from other units of the university. We believe that the health planner and administrator should know a good deal about man's growth, development, and health.

While the scientific bases including the biological sciences, political science, economics, psychology, and sociology in their theoretical and applied aspects are our foundation stones, the students' major will be in health planning and administration. Courses in the major include medical or health care organization, public health administration, principles of health planning, health services evaluation, health economics, policy issues for health planning, and health planning methods including special applications, biostatistics, operations research, and health systems engineering.

The courses are structured for meaningful integration of the health studies materials with the knowledge acquired from earlier and concurrent studies in the basic disciplines. Additional courses will be developed, particularly those on administrative behavior and principles. While most instruction will be carried out at the main campus of the university, some courses will be offered at several of the university's Commonwealth campuses.

Although the number of majors cannot be

projected with certainty, we anticipate that within 5 years the number will range from 40 to 70 graduates per year. This assumption is reasonable for any new baccalaureate program at this university. In addition, we expect the program offerings to be used by students in the basic social science fields, particularly economics, political science, and sociology, and by students in other divisions of the college, which should facilitate their meaningful interaction with health professionals in later work environments.

Students are free to select from a wide range of courses in many departments of the university and can achieve maximum flexibility in program design. Some students might decide to study economics or political science intensively; some might elect to do less work in economics and more in sociology; others might emphasize the statistical phases of health work. The accompanying program illustrates what one student's study plan might be. The program covers three terms a year—unless the student elects to attend summer classes.

Major in Biological Health

Option in Health Planning and Administration (130 credits)

First term 10 credits	Introductory macroeconomic analysis and policy----- 3	Ninth term 12 credits
Composition and rhetoric----- 3	Introduction to clinical medicine----- 3	Epidemiology----- 3
Introductory chemistry----- 3	Political behavior----- 3	Advanced public finance----- 3
Government and politics in modern society----- 3	Sixth term 10 credits	Principles of health planning----- 3
Physical education----- 1	Introduction to medical care organization----- 3	Socioeconomic change and the process of dislocation----- 3
Second term 10 credits	Maternal and child health----- 3	Tenth term 12 credits
The writing of ideas----- 3	Public finance----- 3	Methodology of sociology----- 3
Life science----- 3	Physical education----- 1	Health planning methods----- 3
American national government----- 3	Seventh term 12 credits	Conceptions in development----- 3
Introduction to human development----- 1	State and local taxation----- 3	Operations research and human systems engineering----- 3
Third term 10 credits	American local government and administration----- 3	Eleventh term 10 credits
Effective speech----- 3	Principles of public health administration----- 3	Field projects----- 4
Physiology----- 3	Man and moral value----- 3	Planning and evaluating human service programs----- 3
Psychology----- 3	Eighth term 12 credits	Health planning methods, special applications----- 3
Physical education----- 1	Bureaucracy and public policy----- 3	Twelfth term 10 credits
Fourth term 10 credits	Dimensions of community development and social change----- 3	Health services evaluation----- 3
Nutrition of the family----- 3	Social and political philosophy----- 3	Field projects----- 2
Government and politics of the American States----- 3	Statistics----- 3	Computer technology for human services programing----- 3
Introductory microeconomic analysis and policy----- 3		Policy issues for health planning----- 2
Physical education----- 1		
Fifth term 12 credits		
Introductory sociology----- 3		

Concurrently with these courses, the faculty and advanced undergraduates will attempt to refine the definitions and objectives of the courses, making certain that they are relevant to the tasks that will confront the graduates in work situations. The program will entail field-work and the study of agencies and ongoing health planning programs. The results of this research will contribute to the improvement of the Pennsylvania State University program and should help in structuring graduate programs at other universities. The information could lead to accurate job descriptions for health planners, health administrators, and health service evaluators.

The undergraduate program, as stated, will not be confined to the classroom. For effective application of the social sciences, we advocate field experience and student participation in research. All students will be required to take at least six credits in field projects, participating in a meaningful work or research exercise in health planning or evaluation.

Health agency experience. Students will be encouraged to work in a health agency on a faculty-approved project. For example, each term we plan to place a number of students in community-setting positions that will give them meaningful work experiences. The college will program this work for the students and approve in advance the appropriateness of the tasks. During the term, a faculty member will conduct a series of colloquia for the students in the community locale to discuss with them the significance of their experience. A number of Federal, State, and local agencies already have indicated a desire to cooperate in this effort.

University research project. The university expects to carry out a number of research projects on comprehensive community planning and health system design studies, from which both undergraduate and graduate students can learn and to which they can contribute.

Graduates from this program will find satisfying employment and many growth opportunities in health and health-related agencies at all levels of government, in regional and community agencies, in hospitals, and in the supporting industries. Students who wish to go on to graduate study will be qualified to enter nearly any graduate school of public health. Alternatively,

they could attend the College of Human Development's graduate program in Social Systems Planning, Administration, and Evaluation.

Undergraduate vs. Graduate Education

A number of undergraduate programs are being developed throughout the country in health administration. Some are of limited scope; nearly all are geared to middle management. The Pennsylvania State University program bypasses day-to-day administrative management to encompass, instead, planning and policy administration. Its curriculum is designed for top management skills. We do not expect that new graduates with bachelor of science degrees only will "take over" large institutions, but rather that they will have the "turn of mind" and some of the basic skills and understanding necessary to move up a career ladder.

Naturally, I do not want to suggest that graduate education is no longer desirable or necessary. Graduate education is invaluable, particularly if the student has a solid base on which to build. This university is providing such a base. Consider what can be done with a graduate student whose undergraduate preparation took him through State and local government, pressure groups, political sociology, taxation and fiscal policy, advanced public finance, and statistics. This substantive work, normally taught undergraduates, is extremely appropriate for health planning and administration. If these studies are applied in health planning and administration courses, then a graduate school has something solid on which to build and students channeled to it. If on the other hand the student elects to terminate his formal education with the B.S. degree, he is, by virtue of his training, prepared to embark on a useful career in the health field.

Some people have questioned the appropriateness of teaching graduate school courses to undergraduates. We at the university believe that tradition should not shackle a curriculum. Students today are better prepared, more sophisticated, and more mature than they were a decade or two ago. Whoever teaches undergraduates in health must take these facts into account. The sciences generally have done so.

College material is now being taught in high schools, and graduate school material is being taught to undergraduates.

Short-Term Training and Research

With the undergraduate program established the faculty plans to fulfill the university's commitment to continuing education and short-term training. We believe that a publicly supported university has such an obligation. First, we propose to develop continuing education courses at several of the 20 Commonwealth campuses of the university located throughout the State. These campuses are the main centers of undergraduate study during the first 2 years of training and the locale for much continuing education. Second, the university plans to have a number of intensive short-term training workshops at selected Commonwealth campuses as well as at University Park, directed mainly at health agency personnel who want to improve their planning, administrative, and evaluating skills.

Research and teaching go hand in hand, and the college does not plan to divorce the two. Interdisciplinary and applied research are missions of the college, as is the involvement of both undergraduate and graduate students in all research projects. Research will be encouraged in the following main categories related to the instruction program:

1. *Planning.* The college is interested in identifying and testing planning techniques and, just as important, in developing criteria for assessing or evaluating the planning process. What techniques are useful in planning and for what purposes? How does one determine

whether a planner or planning agency or a planning process is effective? What criteria are appropriate for assessing planning effectiveness?

2. *Evaluation.* The college will work with health service agencies to identify impact measures; that is, measures indicating how the health of the consumer is maintained or improved. Current impact measures are not precise. The college believes that only through the identification and use of impact measures can the health system obtain a rational basis for allocating resources and for claiming additional resources.

3. *Health indexes and a common health index.* The generation of impact data on health services, while contributing to better decisions, will still create dilemmas between many competing categorical programs. How does one decide the ranking of an air pollution project, a kidney dialysis project, and a family planning project? The college is interested in pursuing the identification and testing of indexes common to all health services. The desirability of this search, despite methodological problems, is evident from the funding dilemmas posed by the recent Federal decategorization of funds under section 314(e) of the Public Health Service Act.

The undergraduate program is now operational. Experienced faculty has been recruited. The first courses were offered in the spring term of 1969, and a full range of courses is being offered in the 1969-70 academic year.

Tearsheet Requests

Dr. Marshall W. Raffel, College of Human Development, Pennsylvania State University, University Park, Pa. 16802